

Bidding Opportunity ED-SM03701

The Iowa Department of Education is seeking a consultant/facilitator to organize and pilot 15 parent focus groups to be planned and implemented with parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities to gather their perceptions about the Iowa Alternate Assessment process. A final report is due June 30th summarizing parent perceptions, feelings, and suggestions for improving the process. A website survey must also be developed and a pilot test of the focus group process must be conducted.

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Bid Closes: 2/12/2007 4:30 p.m.

Additional Information listed below:

IAA PARENT FOCUS GROUP RFP

1. Purpose: To gain input from parents of students with the most significant cognitive disabilities about the Iowa Alternate Assessment process and to seek their support for its implementation.
2. Timeframe: April 1- June 30, 2007
3. OVERALL Process for the Parent Input Project:
 - Determine the intended outcomes for the initiative
 - Extend opportunities to partner in the project to the Parent Education Connection (PEC) and special education representatives at the Area Education Agencies (AEA)
 - Organize focus groups with the assistance of the PEC in each of the AEAs
 - Develop focus group questions. Survey will be placed on the Department website so parents who cannot attend the focus groups will be able to provide input
 - Pilot focus group process in central Iowa. Make changes, if necessary, to improve questions and process

- Record and organize information gained from the focus groups and surveys. All concerns and suggestions will be considered in the final draft of the report

4. Project Tasks:

- Meet with Department of Education project initiators to finalize project plan, timeline, and intended outcomes. (April, 2007)
- Meet with Parent Education Connection Coordinators to discuss the project and secure their commitment. (April, 2007)
- Contact Area Education Agency Special Education Consultants to inform them of the project and gain their support. (April, 2007)
- Design the focus group questions with input from the Department of Education and PEC coordinators. (April, 2007)
- Design the survey questions. (April, 2007)
- Organize the focus group and survey for central Iowa to test the viability of the approach. (May, 2007)
- Make any changes to improve the initiative before full implementation state-wide (May, 2007)
- Work with PEC coordinators to identify parents in each of the Area Education Agencies who would be a good candidate for a focus group. Ask for their help in inviting these people to participate. (April, 2007)
- Simultaneously, secure a location and time for each of the focus groups with PEC coordinator assistance. (April, 2007)
- Hold the focus groups and record all responses to the questions. (April-May, 2007)
- Refer to the intended outcomes throughout the project to ensure it is on target to achieve those results. (Throughout)
- Send out the surveys, either electronically or by mail. (April, 2007)
- Organize the data by key areas that emerge. (May, 2007)
- Determine whether the project outcomes were achieved. (May, 2007)
- Prepare a final report (June 30, 2007)